

Special Notice: Innovation Combine / Request for White Paper and RPP20-09 Release Dates Announcement:

I. Background

The U.S. Army would like to invite interested companies to participate in the Innovation Combine at the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Futures Conference, being tentatively held 23-25 June 2020 in Austin, TX. The Innovation Combine, scheduled to take place on 24 June 2020, will provide a forum to collaborate with the Army, earn prize money, and provide potential funding opportunities to tackle Army challenges with scalable power and energy solutions and novel materials for weight reduction and survivability. Prize money will be awarded to selected projects through the Army xTech Vector program and funding opportunities will be available through the Ground Vehicle Systems Other Transaction Agreement (GVS OTA), W15QKN-17-9-1025 as described below. Refer to section "III. Phase I – Request for White Papers (RWP)" for requirements and registration information. White paper submissions that do not address the problem statements below or not fitting the definition of a prototype* project will not be considered for this effort. The efforts described in this Notice are being pursued under the authorities of 10 USC 2374a and 10 USC 2371b.

II. Purpose and Process

The purpose of the Innovation Combine is to deliver an innovative approach to compete for an award in the accelerating military technology ecosystem. Submissions will be open to prototype* projects that may considerably improve Army platforms, Army weapons systems, or Army support systems. Topic areas and associated problem statements are listed below. Only U.S.-based companies or organizations are considered eligible to participate in this effort. White papers that do not address the problem statements below or submitted from non U.S.-based companies or organizations will not be considered for this effort.

Topic A: Scalable power and energy solutions.

Problem Statement A: The Army has a need for lighter, energy dense, safe, rechargeable batteries that can be demonstrated at the battery prototype level of 400Whr/kg (cell level 500Whr/kg) **-or-** a small form factor power generation system that could include fuel cells or small engine technologies to recharge batteries while on the move that is light weight, (< 5-6 lbs., including fuel).

Topic B: Novel materials for weight reduction and survivability.

Problem Statement B: For military ground vehicle structures, ballistic and blast load requirements often trump structural requirements, leading to very thick structures. Contrary to aerospace, for thick ground vehicle structures, materials with high strength and elongation capabilities are better than ultra-high stiffness materials. To enable lightweight military ground vehicles, there is a need for affordable materials that are resilient to high loading rate events and are able to absorb large amounts of energy without breaking.

The process of this competition will consist of the following three (3) phases:

Phase I – Request for White Papers (RWP)

Phase II – Request for Prototype Proposals (RPP)

Phase III – Presentations

III. Phase I – Request for White Papers (RWP)

In Phase I, the Government will release a RWP, evaluate all white paper submissions and select up to 28 projects to receive a prize award of \$5,000 each. The companies that are selected for the prize award will be invited to attend and participate in the AUSA Futures Conference.

All interested companies shall submit a white paper outlining their technology and viability, the potential impact on the Army, and other dual-use cases. Specifically in the abstract section, each company must include a narrative about why their solution fits the definition of a prototype* project. Each white paper will be reviewed by an Army panel from the Army Science and Technology (S&T) ecosystem including technical, acquisition, and user experts. Companies may submit more than one (1) white paper per problem statement.

The Government anticipates white paper submissions will be evaluated and ranked using the following scoring criteria (further details on each scoring dimension can be found on the Innovation Combine registration page):

- Potential for Impact/Revolutionizing the Army – 35%
- Scientific and Engineering Viability – 35%
- Dual Use – 20%
- Proposal Quality – 10%

White paper submissions must adhere to the following requirements:

- All white papers must be submitted using the template found on the registration page, “InnovationCombine_WhitePaper_Template.doc”. Any white papers submitted in a format other than that provided by the template will not be reviewed.
- Please list your company name and white paper title EXACTLY how you would like them to appear on any contest marketing materials. White paper respondents should use clear and concise white paper titles to give readers and potential stakeholders understanding of what the technology is.
- White paper submissions that do not address one (1) of the problem statements above or does not fit the definition of a prototype* project will not be considered for this notice and the Innovation Combine.
- All white paper submissions must be received by 11:59 PM PST on 15 April 2020. White paper submissions received after the deadline will not be considered.

White papers, prototype* project proposals, quad charts, and presentations submitted to the effort may generate interest by another Army organization for a funding opportunity outside of this program (e.g., submission of a proposal under a Broad Agency Announcement). The interested Army organization may contact the participant to provide additional information. Additionally, all white papers and prototype* projects proposals are treated as privileged information.

Up to 28 projects with the highest ranking white papers will receive a prize of \$5,000 and those companies will be invited to attend the AUSA Futures Conference, being tentatively held 23-25 June 2020 in Austin, TX. Based on the submitted white papers, the Government will select eight (8) of the 28 companies to participate in Phase II – Request for Prototype Proposals (RPP) and Phase III - Presentations.

Register Now

https://usg.valideval.com/teams/innovation_combine/signup

IV. Phase II – Request for Prototype Proposals (RPP)

In Phase II, of the 28 selected projects from Phase I, the Government will select up to eight (8) projects to submit a prototype* project proposal, quad chart, presentation, and invite them to present their prototype* project at the Innovation Combine, held on 24 June 2020.

During this phase, all eight (8) selected companies will be required to become a National Advanced Mobility Consortium, Inc. (NAMC)*** member and participate in-person at the Innovation Combine. Any company that is unable or unwilling to become a NAMC*** member and attend the Innovation Combine will not be eligible for any future awards. In the event a selected company is unable or unwilling to become a NAMC member, the Government may select an alternate company from the white paper responses provided in Phase I.

Please refer to section “VIII. Proposed Schedule” for prototype* project proposal submission timelines.

The Government will evaluate all prototype* project proposals in accordance with established evaluation criteria, which will be provided in the RPP.

Prototype* project proposal and quad chart submissions must adhere to the following requirements:

- Prototype* project proposal and quad chart submissions that do not address one (1) of the problem statements above or does not fit the definition of a prototype* project will not be considered for this effort and the Innovation Combine.
- All quad chart submissions must be marked for public release and will be used to share your company and technology information with AUSA Futures Conference attendees, potential commercial partners, and Government stakeholders.
- All prototype* projects proposal and quad chart submissions must be received by 3:00 PM ET on the anticipated dates provided in Section VIII of this notice. Prototype* project proposal and quad chart submissions received after the deadline may not be considered.

V. Phase III – Presentations

In Phase III, the eight (8) selected companies will present their prototype* project live** to a panel of Army subject matter experts (SME), which will include a questions and answers session.

Eight (8) selected companies will be required to submit a presentation. Details of presentation submission will be outlined in the RPP, provided during Phase II. The eight (8) selected companies will conduct a live**, in-person presentation, to include a questions and answers session, to a panel of Army SMEs at the Innovation Combine. Company presentations will be held live** at the Innovation Combine to an open forum of registered AUSA Futures Conference attendees that may include Government, industry, and academia attendees. Project representatives will present their prototype* project(s) and team ability. Each company will have up to ten (10) minutes to present, followed by up to ten (10) minutes for questions and answers with the Army panel of SMEs.

The Government will evaluate all live** presentations in accordance with established evaluation criteria, which will be provided in the RPP.

Presentation submissions must adhere to the following requirements:

- Presentation submissions that are not consistent with the white paper/proposal response, do not address one (1) of the problem statements above, or does not fit the definition of a prototype* project will not be considered for the Innovation Combine.
- Presentations must be marked for public release in order to be eligible for briefing at the Innovation Combine to an open forum of registered AUSA Futures Conference attendees that may include Government, industry, and academia attendees.

The RPP will outline presentation submission date. Presentation submissions received after the deadline may not be considered for the Innovation Combine.

Upon conclusion of the eight (8) presentations, the Government will select up to two (2) projects as the most highly rated prototype* projects for a pre-award, as based on the Government’s evaluation of proposals and presentations. The two (2) projects selected for a pre-award under the GVS OTA will be required to sign and execute a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) during the evening of 24 June 2020. Furthermore, the two (2) projects selected for award under the GVS OTA will also receive an additional prize award of \$45,000 each. Following the Innovation Combine, the selected projects will enter into negotiations with the Government with anticipated final agreement award(s) within 60 days of conclusion of the AUSA Futures Conference (duration is subject to change based on negotiations).

The six (6) projects not selected as the most highly rated prototype* projects will receive an additional prize award of \$15,000 each only.

Feedback:

Detailed feedback will be provided to all projects at the end of Phase I – RWP. Detailed feedback will be provided to all projects at the end of Phase II – RPP upon request. Detailed feedback will be provided to all projects at the end of Phase III – Presentations upon request. The purpose of providing feedback is to help accelerate transition of the technology to an Army user by providing insight on best applications for the technology within the Army, suggestions for product improvement for Army use, and recommended next steps for development. The Government will not be obligated to respond to questions or inquiries regarding the provided feedback.

VI. Prizes & Incentives

Prizes will be offered under 10 USC 2374A (prize competitions). The total prize award pool is \$320,000. The prototype* project pre-awards and awards will be offered under 10 USC 2371b, utilizing the GVS OTA. The total GVS OTA award pool is \$600,000. Other non-monetary incentives are provided through the Innovation Combine program to help small business engage, and stay engaged with the Army. See section “VII. Major Activities” for further clarification.

VII. Major Activities

The following details monetary awards:

Activity	Number Invited	Number of Winners	Prize
• Phase I - RWP	Open	Up to 28	\$5,000 each
• Phase II & III - RPP, Quad Chart, and Presentation	Up to 8	Up to 8	\$15,000 to up to 6 each \$45,000 to up to 2 each
• OTA Awards	Up to 8	Up to 2	\$300,000 each

VIII. Proposed Schedule (Subject to Adjustments)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>
• 15 March 2020	White paper submission period opens.
• 15 April 2020	White paper submission period closes.
• 01-12 May 2020	RPP, quad charts, and presentations sent to eight (8) selected companies; eight (8) selected companies must join NAMC*** as well as confirm their attendance and participation in the Innovation Combine with NAMC***.
• 2 Weeks After RPP Release	Prototype* project proposal, quad chart, and presentation submission period from the eight (8) selected projects closes.
• 24 June 2020	Eight (8) selected companies provide live**, in-person prototype* project presentations, to include a questions and answers session, at the Innovation Combine (agenda will be provided in advance).
• 24 June 2020	Presentations, Government announcements, prize awards, and signing of MOAs.
• 24 August 2020	GVS OTA prototype* projects awarded (subject to change).

IX. Disclaimers

Registered participants shall be required to assume any and all risks and waive claims against the Federal Government and its related projects, except in the case of willful misconduct, for any injury, death, damage, or loss of property, revenue, or profits, whether direct, indirect, or consequential, arising from their participation in this competition, whether the injury, death, damage, or loss arises through negligence or otherwise.

Participants shall be required to obtain liability insurance or demonstrate financial responsibility, in amounts determined by the Army, for claims by—

- Third parties for death, bodily injury, or property damage, or loss resulting from an activity carried out in connection with participation in this prize competition, with the Federal Government named as an additional insured under the registered participant's insurance policy and registered participants agreeing to indemnify the Federal Government against third party claims for damages arising from or related to prize competition activities; and
- Federal Government for damage or loss to Government property resulting from such an activity.

X. Intellectual Property

The Army is a strong proponent of deliberate intellectual property (IP) rights and management by the private sector and the Department of Defense.

For the Innovation Combine effort:

- The Federal Government may not gain an interest in IP developed by a participant without the written consent of the participant;
- Nothing in this competition shall diminish the Government's rights in patents, technical data, technical information, computer software, computer databases, and computer software documentation that the Government had prior to this effort, or is entitled to, under any other Government Agreement or contract, or is otherwise entitled to under law; and

- The Federal Government may negotiate a license for the use of IP developed by a registered participant in the prize competition.

XI. Notes

The Government will not reimburse projects/companies for any costs associated with preparing or submitting a response to this notice. Participation in the Innovation Combine is voluntary. The Government will not reimburse the Innovation Combine attendees for any costs associated with their unsolicited participation. This notice/competition/Innovation Combine and/or the information presented herein will not obligate the Government in any manner. The posted information is provided for planning purposes only and does not constitute an RPP.

*A prototype project can generally be described as a preliminary pilot, test, evaluation, demonstration, or agile development activity used to evaluate the technical or manufacturing feasibility or military utility of a particular technology, process, concept, end item, effect, or other discrete feature. Prototype projects may include systems, subsystems, components, materials, methodology, technology, or processes. By way of illustration, a prototype project may involve: a proof of concept; a pilot; a novel application of commercial technologies for defense purposes; a creation, design, development, demonstration of technical or operational utility; or combinations of the foregoing, related to a prototype.

**Presentations, to include a questions and answers session, will be held live, in-person at the Innovation Combine to an open forum of registered AUSA Futures Conference attendees that may include Government, industry, and academia attendees.

***For information on the NAMC and/or how to become a member, visit the following website:
<https://www.namconsortium.org/>

XII. Points of Contact

Phase I - RWP: The xTech Vector Team
Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army, Research and Technology
Email: usarmy.pentagon.hqda-asa-alt.mbx.xtechsearch@mail.mil

or

Phase II – RPP & Phase III – Presentations: The GVS OTA Team
Army Contracting Command (ACC) – Detroit Arsenal
Emails: marta.furman.civ@mail.mil, elizabeth.a.wearn.civ@mail.mil, and mohamed.a.karaki.civ@mail.mil

Register Now

https://usg.valideval.com/teams/innovation_combine/signup